

OUR SOCIAL CHAT

All letters intended for this department should be addressed to "Aunt Jennie," care of The Progressive Farmer, Raleigh, N. C.

Aunt Jennie's Letter.

A wise old preacher advised his brethren not to admit young men into the ministry unless they appeared more broad-minded and enthusiastic than their elders. "For," said he, "we must always allow for shrinkage." The same allowance is necessary in every life for the inevitable closing-in of the real upon the ideals of youth, and the unavoidable narrowing of hope and aim that must come with middle age. The more ideals we start out with, the more joyous is our living. The dreariness of middle age is caused largely by the fact that its ideals are so shrunken and disfigured that they fail to inspire either vitality or hope. As long as we believe in life, and in love, and in friendship, and know that real heroism does exist and other ideal possibilities, life is worth living and we are strong to take our part in it. There is pleasure in living for ideals; they inspire hope and courage. But living without them is the dull gray life in reality.

"All are weak and all are strong, Patience righteth every wrong. All good things the will must task, All achievement patience ask. Chief with each other's weakness Need we patience, love and meekness;

Who takes ill another's ill, Beareth two loads up the hill." Then there is another verse that I have read somewhere that I must quote:

"It is easy enough to be pleasant When life flows along like a song, But the man that's worth while, Is the man that will smile When everything's going dead wrong."

If you fail to find your letter on our page this week, just "bide a wee" and you will see it cosily ensconced ere long.

Many, many thanks for the kindly expressions of interest in Social Chat. It has succeeded, it is succeeding; it will succeed with your help. There is no such word as fail in our vocabulary, provided we have your co-operation.

AUNT JENNIE.

Do Things that Help.

Dear Aunt Jennie:—Some days ago while standing by the fence just after a beautiful rain and looking over the refreshed vegetation, my eyes fell with great admiration on a little American sparrow as it vigilantly skipped alongside the potato rows catching, it seemed, every insect that preyed upon the vines. This called forth reflection. And while meditating upon this innocent little bird and its benevolent work, I fancied therein a great moral lesson for humanity.

I declare to you, wherever I should chance to see one of these little sparrows I would remember tenderly this little one and would not harm or allow it to be harmed because of its kinship to the one I saw doing such a good deed.

Do you not believe as we go through life, destroying here and there germs of evil insects which sap the moral vine and thereby revive and protect the drooping plant of spirituality, that the Heavenly Father sees and remembers in mercy and suffers the more evil to go unchecked a great deal longer because of the redeemed who are trying to live according to His will?

We should do things that will be

a real help to some one. And that will often strengthen their confidence in the rest of humanity and the influence thus set in motion, will vibrate and revibrate through the ages of time, and then without fail we will receive from the great Fountain Head of love blessings that will make us glad we were privileged to do a kindness to our fellowman.

ROWLAND.

Caswell Co., N. C.

Another Knock-Out for Jack Klinard.

Dear Aunt Jennie:—I guess Jack Klinard is going to marry a rich girl—or rather he will if he can. I think if all the girls were like Grey Eyes and myself, Jack would remain an old bachelor, for I am quite sure such a man can never win my love, for just as sure as the sun shall set in the west to-night, if such a man ever marry, his wife would soon have to purchase some hair pins to do up his hair and his razor would rust, and I doubt very much whether she could persuade him to wash his face and hands when Sunday comes.

I know more than one poor married woman who would be glad to go dressed like she did before she was married, but carelessness of her husband is such she can't afford it. Her husband has changed so much. Before they were married if he called on her in the week he must wear his tie and collar, and he must have his hair trimmed, and now he would not know a man's collar from a mule's. Trusting that Jack K. will find a wife that will please him.

BLUE EYES.

P. S.—If any of you girls should ever meet Cousin Jack give him my love and best wishes, though I fear we shall never see or hear from him again. He must be dead, or he could not stand this war.

Neatness in Dress of Men and Women.

Dear Aunt Jennie:—Will you let me too say a word on the subject now agitated in the Social Chat, neatness of dress in married women?

It is not so hard to be clean and neat—and that is all that is required. A woman who loves and respects her husband and children will not go untidy, even when at work. We each one have our own individual choice of dress. Some may like a mother-hubbard; I think it is a very good dress if neatly belted. I know a lovely little woman who wears them, and she is all smiles when you visit her; but I have seen some women that were not neat or sweet in mother-hubbards. If I am not mistaken, the kimono came from Japan; and people do say the Japanese lady lives long because her dress is airy and light. The women there do not have much work to do, their houses being

constructed on economical plans to save the housewife labor, and very plainly furnished.

We all should try to be attractive. I have seen some married men that looked anything but neat and clean; slouch hat, and unshaven. But just let us look at them, after they become widowers! Why, you would scarcely know them! Such a change—new hat, new suit, beard off, and if any left on their upper lip, if you look right close you may discover that darkness is not exactly natural. It is enough to make anyone smile. But after they marry it is the same old hat and don't-care ways. Are not my words true?

HAPPINESS.

Burke Co., N. C.

More Notes from Jeanie Deans.

"Surely you don't want to go to another World's Fair; you have been to every one since that one in New Orleans," said Mrs. D. to me.

"Yes, I want to go," I answer. "President McKinley, in his last talk to the people, said 'Expositions are the time-keepers of Progress'—I enjoy the trend of Progress—find some thing new in every one."

* * *

"Here you are, at this uncivilized hour of 7 a. m., doing Point de Bruses with these horrid poll parrots and canaries keeping up such a fuss around you," exclaimed my gay young friend as she ran in for some roses. "I just bet you have been over that old steamer and royal fryer that you like so well, cooking breakfast."

"Yes, and dinner is done too; cook is still sick. Annie dear," I say to her, "a smart man, long ago had this to say:

"All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players, They have their exits and their entrances, One man in his time plays many parts."

Another man said:

"Be not like dumb driven cattle, Be a hero in the strife."

Now in the 'many parts' that come to us, it is wise to love our work and learn to do it well. Not like 'the gallery slave, scourged to his dungeon.'"

"Well! you are, high flown this morning; give me my flowers, please, and I'll be off to the picnic. I like that better than work or poetry," said my merry friend.

* * *

The Klinard tourney goes on apace; may I throw my lance in the fray? Even Mrs. Helen Watts McVey, the brilliant and popular assistant editor of "The Commoner," is taking a hand. (One of the special pleasures of St. Louis was my visit to her charming home.) I wonder if it has occurred to Jack K. that sometimes the husband comes in from work, looking, not "tattered and torn" like the man the "maiden all forlorn" married, but with hands and garments soiled and his head all a tousele? I don't think, even in this plight, he is unlovely to his wife; behind in all she sees the loyal, loving heart that is providing for her comfort—and is content.

And so with the true husband in this busy, utilitarian world: he does not miss the dainty frills and sunny curls, but sees the brave helpmeet, toiling by his side; loves and admires her more even than when "this old ring she wears was new." In the day dawn of our race, in that beautiful garden, it was the Divine decree: "It is not good that the man should be alone, I will make an helpmeet for him." Try matrimony, Jack, for yourself—it is "the distant hills that are steep." Like John Anderson, Jo, you will "climb the hill together."

JEANIE DEANS.

Laurens Co., S. C.

In our keen look at the strong outward practicalities of life, do not let us forget its inmost secret of power; that all noble thoughts, all noble possibilities of life, spring out of this Love, or touch their finest meaning in it; that there is no factor like it in the makeup of the world.—Brooke Herford.

It is the talent of human nature to run from one extreme to another. —Swift.



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